

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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TAGS: PFOR, GE, GW, IT

SUBJECT: BORDER INCIDENTS CONTINUE TO BE A WORRISOME FACTOR IN
FRG/GDR RELATIONS

REF: A) BERLIN 6419; B) BERLIN 6432

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER HAS GAINED SOME
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND ATTITUDES FROM COUNTERPARTS
IN THE ITALIAN EMBASSY AND WEST GERMAN REPRESENTATION
IN BERLIN ABOUT THE SUBJECT BORDER INCIDENTS. THE WEST
GERMAN REPRESENTATION IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH THE
POSSIBILITY OF INCIDENTS DURING A PLANNED RALLY AT THE
REICHSTAG IN WEST BERLIN BY CDU YOUTH GROUPS COMING FROM
WEST GERMANY ON AUGUST 13, THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BERLIN
WALL. (SEE SEPTTEL FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEMONSTRATION IN
EAST BERLIN). THEY CONTINUE ALSO TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE
POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER BORDER INCIDENTS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN
TOLD BY GDR MFA OFFICIALS THAT THEY WILL PROVIDE NO
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FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE SHOOTING OF CORGHI AND THAT THEY CONSIDER THE MATTER CLOSED. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BE DISSATISFIED WITH THE DEARTH OF INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THEM BY GDR AUTHORITIES ON THIS MATTER. END SUMMARY

2. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS AUGUST 12, EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER SPOKE WITH ITALIAN EMBASSY OFFICER (BROFFERIO) AND WITH THE HEAD OF THE SECTION IN THE WEST GERMAN REPRESENTATION DEALING WITH INNER-GERMAN AND INTERNAL GDR MATTERS (LEHMANN). IT WAS CLEAR FROM THE CONVERSATION AT THE ITALIAN EMBASSY THAT AMBASSADOR DELL'ELMO IS FURIOUS" ABOUT THE WAY HIS REQUESTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE CORGHI KILLING ARE ANSWERED IN A SUPERFICIAL AND UNSATISFACTORY MANNER. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NIER, AND HEAD OF THE MFA LEGAL DEPARTMENT, KLOBES, HAVE BOTH BEEN INVOLVED IN RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION. ON AUGUST 11 AND AGAIN ON AUGUST 12 THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD THAT THE GDR AUTHORITIES HAD NO MORE INFORMATION TO IMPART ON THIS SUBJECT AND THAT THEY CONSIDERED THE MATTER CLOSED EXCEPT FOR PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO CORGHI'S WIDOW WHICH STILL HAS TO BE WORKED OUT. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY NOW BELIEVES THAT CORGHI WAS KILLED INSTANTLY BY A SHOT WHICH PENETRATED HIS SHOULDERS AND PASSED THROUGH THREE VERTEBRAE. THEY ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE SHOT WHICH KILLED CORGHI WAS FIRED TO KILL AND NOT MERELY TO HINDER HIS APPROACH TO THE GDR CONTROL POST. THE ITALIAN EMBASSY IS AWAITING FURTHER WORD FROM ROME AS TO POSSIBLE FURTHER STEPS WITH GDR AUTHORITIES HERE.

3. ACCORDING TO FRG REP LEHMANN THE DEATH OF CORGHI AND THE RELEASE OF FRG CITIZEN BUBBERS BY GDR AUTHORITIES A FEW DAYS AGO ARE IMPORTANT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EMOTIONAL SITUATION WHICH HAS DEVELOPED ON BOTH SIDES OVER BORDER INCIDENTSGENERALLY IN THE RECENT PAST. THE MAIN

CONCERN AT THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IS A PLANNED DEMONSTRATION BY MEMBERS OF THE CDU YOUTH ORGANIZATION, JUNGE UNION, WHO ARE EXPECTED TO TRAVEL BY BUS FROM WEST GERMANY OVER THE ACCESS ROUTE TO WEST BERLIN IN ORDER TO

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JOIN WITH WEST BERLINERS IN A DEMONSTRATION AT THE REICHSTAG BUILDING THE EVENING OF AUGUST 13, CDU GENERAL SCERETARY BIEDENKOPF IS SCHEDULED TO SPEAK AND A TORCH-LIGHTPARADE IS PLANNED FOR 10 PM. LEHMANN SAID THAT IT SEEMED "POLITICALLY" IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP THIS DEMONSTRATION INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANY OT THE DEMAONSTRATORS WOULD TAKE PLACE. (THE REAR SIDE OF THE REICHSTAG IS WITHIN

A MATTER OF FEET OF THE WALL NEAR BANDENBURG GATE.)

4. LEHMANN SAID THAT THE HEAD OF THE FRG REPRESENTATION, GAUS, HAD GONE TO MFA TO SEE DEPUTY SECRETARY NIER ABOUT THE NEUES DEUTSCHLAND EDITORIAL OF AUGUST 9. THE RESULT WAS THAT GAUS RETURNED CONVINCED THAT THE GDR DID NOT WISH TO ESCALATE THE BORDER INCIDENTS INTO A MAJOR CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE ADDED THAT THE FRG AUTHORITIES WERE INCLINED TO PLACE EMPHASIS UPON THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE EDITORIAL WHICH SPOKE OF A CONTINUATION OF POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. LEHMANN CONCLUDED HIS EXPOSITION BY NOTING THAT BOTH COUNTRIES WISHED TO PREVENT BORDER INCIDENTS ALTHOUGH TO CONTROL THEM COMPLETELY FROM THE WESTERN SIDE SEEMED TO BE IMPOSSIBLE.

5. WITH REGARD TO THE RELEASE OF FRG CITIZEN WILLI BUBBERS, LEHMANN SAID THAT AFTER HIS RELEASE BUBBERS HAD TOLD THE FOLLOWING STORY: HE HAD TRAVERSED AN 80 METER STRIP OF LAND WHICH WAS IN GDR TERRITORY IN ORDER TO REACH A FORTIFIED FENCE WHERE HE PROCEEDED TO TALK TO THE GUARD ON THE OTHER SIDE. AFTER TALKING WITH THE GUARD AND WHEN IT APPEARED THAT THE GUARD WANTED TO ARREST HIM, BUBBERS RAN PARALLEL TO THE FENCE BEFORE DARTING BACK TOWARD FRG TERRITORY. THE EAST GERMAN GUARD THEN SHOT AND WOUNDED BUBBERS IN THE SHOULDER KNOCKING HIM TO THE GROUND. BUBBERS THEN ATTEMPTED TO CRAWL ALONG THE GROUND AND WAS SHOT AGAIN BY THE GUARD THIS TIME IN THE HIP AND HE LAY STILL. IT IS AN ASSUMPTION THAT THE GUARD BELIEVED THAT HE HAD KILLED BUBBERS AND BUBBERS WAS LEFT UNATTENDED IN EAST GERMAN TERRITORY FOR SOME TIME BEFORE HE WAS PICKED UP. SUBSEQUENTLY, BUBBERS WAS HOSDPITLIZED IN A HOSPITAL NEAR SCHWERIN.

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6. LEHMANN EXPRESSED THE STRONG VIEW THAT LEAVING BUBBERS UNATTENDED FOR A PERIOD OF TIME WAS "A BRUTAL REFLECTION OF THE INSENSITIVITY OF EAST GERMAN BORDER GUARDS". THE RELEASE OF BUBBERS, HOWEVER, IS VIEWED AS A POSITIVE SIGN THAT THE GDR TOO IS INTERESTED IN DAMPING DOWN BORDER INCIDENTS.

7. COMMENT: IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT ANY FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GDR GOVERNMENT OVER THE CORGHI SHOOTING WILL BE DECIDED UPON IN ROME. ITALIAN EMBASSY OFFICER NOTED HIS EMBASSY'S BELIEF THAT GDR BORDER WITH THE FRG IS THE ONLY BORDER IN ALL OF EUROPE WHERE SUCH AN EVENT COULD TAKE PLACE AT PRESENT TIME. POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS HE SAID MIGHT INCLUDE POSTPONEMENT OF A

VISIT TO ITALY BY GDR FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER WHICH THE GDR HAS SOUGHT FOR SOME TIME AND WHICH WAS SCHEDULED PREVIOUSLY TO TAKE PLACE DURING CURRENT CALENDAR YEAR.

8. WEST GERMAN REPRESENTATION OFFICER ASCRIBED THE CURRENT STATE OF NERVOUSNESS OF GDR BORDER GUARDS, AND THE TRAGIC SHOOTINGS MENTIONED ABOVE, MORE TO SPATE OF RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS THAN TO ANY BELIEF THAT EAST GERMAN BORDER SECURITY HAS BEEN SEVERELY TIGHTENED IN RECENT PAST BY DIRECTION OF TOP SED OFFICIALS. HIS VIEW IS THAT GDR BORDER SECURITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN TIGHT. HE ALSO WAS DISINCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT THE OFT-MENTIONED "SCHUSSBEFEHL" TO GDR GUARDS HAS SOMEHOW RECENTLY BEEN STRENGTHENED OR MODIFIED TO MAKE IT A MORE RIGID COMMAND. DESIGNED TO KILL RATHER THAN INJURE SUSPECTED INTRUDERS. IN THIS CONNECTION, LEHMANN RECALLED PREVIOUS PERIODS WHEN SHOTS WERE NOT FIRED AND SUFFICIENT WARNING WAS GIVEN FOR PERSONS INVOLVED TO RETURN OT WESTERN SIDE. POLANSKY

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